

Press Release

Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth

Friday, 24 May 2019

Call to Stop Oil and Gas Survey off West Wales Coast

Plans to explore for oil and gas off the West Wales coast should be scrapped, a local environmental group has told politicians.

Energy company, Eni UK Ltd, has applied to the UK government to carry out the geological survey, which involves firing loud shock waves out of a submerged gun, between 1st June and 30th September.

Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth has written to local MPs, Assembly Members and Government Ministers urging them to oppose the plan because of its harmful impact on marine wildlife, local tourism and fishing, and climate change.

Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth campaigner, Gordon James, said:

“We understand that the survey area would impact on Special Areas of Conservation that are rich in wildlife and meant to be protected.

These areas are internationally renowned for their populations of shellfish, seabirds, dolphins, porpoises and whales, all of which could be harmed by seismic activity. As if this threat was not bad enough, the company intends to begin surveying during the breeding period of certain cetaceans, leading to a significantly increased risk of injury or death to these protected species.

In addition to ecological damage, the proposal would also inevitably disrupt fishing and tourism, which rely on a healthy marine environment and are important for local businesses and employment.

It is indefensible that the UK government should approve of an activity that aims to extract fossil fuels from one of Britain’s most valuable marine wildlife areas just when scientists are warning of the threats of global climate catastrophe and species extinction. It would make a complete mockery of the recent declaration of a climate emergency by both the Welsh Government and the House of Commons.

In view of the global climate and biodiversity emergencies that we face, allowing this to go ahead would be comparable to throwing petrol on a fire that is already going out of control.”

Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth is also organising a petition to the Minister of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy calling on him to refuse the application from Eni UK Ltd to survey for oil and gas off the West Wales coast.

ENDS

For further information contact Gordon James on 01437563670 or 07579964256

